

SOUTH SPA 6 Area Health Office Chronicle

A publication for friends and neighbors of the South Service Planning Area

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Walking Your Way to Better Health in South LA

November 15th, 2003 marked the opening of **The Walk for Health Trail**, a three-mile trail providing an easily accessible and high quality walking experience in Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area (KHSRA) in the Baldwin Hills. The trail encourages park visitors to improve their health by walking and developing a healthy lifestyle. Colorful signs mark the trail highlighting such health concerns as proper breathing, hydration, proper eating habits, calorie control and heart rate. These signs not only tout human health and exercise information but also include facts about the Baldwin Hills' natural environment, plants and animals.

The opening of **The Walk for Health Trail** was marked by activities such as free health screenings, education and information and was largely the outcome of strong collaboration between L.A. County Public Health Service Planning Area (SPA 6) and A Su Salud (TO YOUR HEALTH), a community



From left to right:

Russ Guiney, LA County Dept. of
Parks & Rec.

Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke

Esther Feldman, President, Commu-
nity Conservancy International

Dr. Robert Ross, The California En-
dowment

outreach program for Southern California coordinated by L.A. County Department of Health Services, Health Promotion & Binational/Border Health Division and Quilez & Associates, Inc.. In partnership with the Community Conservancy International's (CCI) Parks for Health Initiative, funded by The California Endowment, SPA 6 and A Su Salud helped coordinate and provide the community a series of free health screenings that included height and weight, vision, vital signs, diabetes and cholesterol tests, free immunizations for children and adults, and much more. In so doing, SPA 6 and A Su Salud helped to address the alarming rise in heart disease, obesity, diabetes and asthma in African-American and Latino communities. In fact, one of the biggest problems facing African-American and Latino communities in Los Angeles is the growing amount of obesity.

Results of the 2002 Los Angeles County Health Survey indicate that those who are obese are much more likely to report poor health and activity limitations and have been diagnosed with chronic diseases as well as depression. These facts are worrisome considering that over half (55%) of the county's adult population is either overweight or obese. The percentage of adults who are obese, based on self-reported height and weight, increased from 14.3% in 1997, to 19.3% in 2002 (Figure 1). Moreover, the obesity rate in 2002 was highest among African-Americans (31%), followed by Latinos (24%), Whites (16%), and Asians (6%) (Figure 1). L.A. County youth are also growing increasingly overweight and number among the least fit in the state.

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WITH MULTICULTURAL CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT CERVICAL CANCER

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County Department of Health Services' Office of Women's Health, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Women's Foundation of California hosted the Cervical Cancer Prevention and Education Initiative Community Breakfast from 8:00am – 10:00am on January 15, 2004 at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown Los Angeles. The event recognized Cervical Cancer Awareness Month (January) and highlighted results of the county's ongoing multicultural campaign to decrease the alarming rates of cervical cancer among high-risk women. Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis spoke to the over 400 community leaders and health professionals who attended.

According to USC's Los Angeles County Cancer Surveillance Program's 2001 Report, on average 561 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer this year and 153 women will die from this disease. Cervical cancer disproportionately affects women of color. Latinas in Los Angeles County are especially affected by this preventable disease, with cervical cancer incidence rates over two times higher than the national average.

The Office of Women's Health has successfully reached thousands of high-risk women in Los Angeles County through an innovative multicultural educational campaign about the importance of Pap tests and how early detection and treatment can save lives. Between January 2002 and December 2003, nearly 13,000 appointments for free Pap tests were made. To reach targeted populations, a multi-lingual hotline (800-793-8090) was established and staffed with operators to assist callers in Spanish, English, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Armenian.

Latinas represented over 60% of the appointments followed by 27% Asian women and 6% African American women. More than 28% of the hotline appointments were for women at high risk for cervical cancer because they had not been screened in three years (the maximum recommended time between Pap tests) or had never been screened. "The response to this campaign clearly shows that using targeted, culturally appropriate messages was successful in reaching a significant number of underserved, at-risk women," said Ellen Eidem, M.S., Acting Director of the Office of Women's Health.

During the campaign, the Office of Women's Health participated in 110 health fairs, visited 78 sites with the Women's Health Mobile Van Outreach Program that screened 1,383 women, and collaborated with over 300 community partners to educate women about cervical cancer and provide free Pap tests to low-income women. More than 96% of the women reached in 2003 were women of color.

The Office of Women's Health was created by The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in 1998 to improve women's health status, focus on women's health policy and improve the access to care in the county safety-net system with emphasis on preventive health services for women. For additional information visit the Office of Women's Health web site at www.paptestla.org.

*By Jessica St. John
Special Projects Manager
Los Angeles County Office of Women's Health*

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

"We are motivated to the degree that the decisions we make are our decisions. To know what we really want is the key to motivation."

Source: Unknown

SOUTH CENTRAL YOUTHS GET THEIR OWN TELEVISION STUDIO

The Media Aid Center today announced the opening of its new facility at 7862 South Western Avenue in the heart of South Central Los Angeles. The Media Aid Center is a nonprofit institution providing youths with training and mentorship in the video and multimedia production fields.

The Center, the brainchild of Martin Cheeseborough, was created through efforts of television and multimedia professionals and their collaboration with local educators. "We were already in the community providing pro bono video services for nonprofit organizations in South Central Los Angeles, Compton, and Long Beach. We were looking for a way for the community to develop its own media infrastructure. After meeting with members of Supervisor Yvonne Burkes staff, the program really took form." Explained Mr. Cheeseborough.

The new facility will provide a highly hands-on training program of documentary and educational multimedia production for 60 youths from Washington Preparatory and Duke Ellington High Schools. An 18 months project oriented mentorship program will follow the training.

The mentorship program is considered a key element in developing successful students, allowing professional adults to support a group of youths through a single project. This method will allow industry professionals with limited time to participate without making a long-term commitment and increase the variety of involvement opportunities.

The Media Aid Center's productions are aimed at engaging youth to empower their community through increased access to information, civic participation, cultural, and educational programs. This access will be achieved through the use of local broadcasts, the internet, and a network of community kiosks currently in development.

Additional plans include a second facility with a sound stage/theater, an adult vocational program, teacher training workshops, and a community access facility.

The Media Aid Center will be opening its doors to its first class February 2nd 2004. Individuals and organization seeking further information should contact the Center at their website www.mediaaidcenter.org or by phone at (323) 751-9048.



By Martin Cheeseborough, Media Aid Center Executive Director

Left to right: Technical volunteer Shawn Van Eeckhoutte, board member Eleanor Ferra, Exec. Director Martin Cheeseborough, Volunteer Phyllis West, and Producer Richard Buttery

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

"Live your life each day as you would climb a mountain. An occasional glance toward the summit keeps the goal in mind, but many beautiful scenes are to be observed from each new vantage point. Climb slowly, steadily, enjoying each passing moment; and the view from the summit will serve as a fitting climax for the journey."

By Harold V. Melchert

Source: The Power of Inspiration, Published by Great Quotations Publishing Co., Glendale Heights, IL

THE LOS ANGELES IMMUNIZATION NETWORK (LINK)

The Los Angeles Immunization Network (LINK) is a confidential web-based information system ("immunization registry") that maintains computerized immunization records across multiple providers. By maintaining centralized up-to-date immunization records and providing valuable tools to providers, LINK can help improve the delivery of immunization services and increase vaccination coverage rates within Los Angeles County.

Some key features of LINK include:

- A quick search screen to look up any child or adult within the registry;
- Automatic forecasting of vaccinations that are due based on the most up-to-date recommendations;
- Automatic generation of reminder/recall postcards, labels or call lists based on upcoming or overdue shots;
- Automatic printing of the official Yellow and Blue official vaccination cards, electronically filled with the most current patient information and immunization history;
- Vaccine inventory tracking and management;
- Tracking of adverse events and contraindications;
- Support of combination vaccines an accelerated vaccination schedule;
- Generation of clinic-level coverage reports.

LINK is a partnership of three local health departments – Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Long Beach – and is part of a national effort; all 50 states, and all counties in California, are implementing immunization registries. LINK began operation in October 2002 and the database currently contains over 45,000 records, with more added every day. In Los Angeles, 3 DHS immunization clinics and 23 community-based clinics are currently using LINK. The priority is to implement LINK in the remaining 9 DHS immunization clinics and at least 25 additional community clinics by June 30, 2004. Deployment to private providers and schools will begin in 2005.

In SPA 6, LINK has been implemented in two community clinics operated by the St. John's well Child and Family Center and LINK staff are currently working to implement LINK in the South Health Center Immunization clinic. LINK will also be used by the Ruth Temple STD clinic as part of a special Hepatitis A/B project. LINK staff work closely with each clinic to ensure that LINK is effectively integrated into existing procedures and adds the most value to the clinic. For more information, please contact Amy Cory, LINK Coordinator for SPA 5-8 at (213) 351-7467.

By Amy Cory, LINK Coordinator for SPA 5-8

SPA6 2003-2004 INFLUENZA CAMPAIGN

I am pleased to report that the flu vaccine rates in SPA 6 continue to increase. We administered 4,643 flu vaccines during the 2003-2004 flu season, which is 968 more than the 2002-2003 flu season. The on-going collaborative efforts between our Public Health team and community and faith-based groups have contributed to our success. We expanded our program this year to include nurse volunteers that were recruited from the Council of Black Nurses Organization. The volunteer nurses received in-service training on the Public Health guidelines for providing flu vaccine in the outreach clinics. The training, which was conducted by Willie Watts-Troutman, APS, and myself, was a success.

Influenza Vaccines Administered					
Year	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
Number	1,328	1,993	4,112	3,675	4,643

*By Lottie Perkins, RN, BSN, MHA
SPA 6 Community Liaison*

The percentage of overweight California youth was highest among boys and among Latino children overall, and highest by area among children attending schools in the south-central region of L.A. County.

Given this disconcerting backdrop, CCI, in partnership with SPA 6, worked closely with a multidisciplinary health committee, consisting of leaders from the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation and Health Services Departments, to develop strategies for reducing health disparities within the surrounding Baldwin Hills communities through park-based prevention and intervention opportunities. Without a doubt, reducing the number of people who are overweight and obese and the associated co-morbidities is a complex public health problem, and one that requires broad societal response to support healthy lifestyle behaviors. However, the opening of **The Walk for Health Trail**, an event largely spearheaded by SPA 6 and A Su Salud, is a healthy step in the right direction. So, what are you waiting for? Enjoy one of the most healthful activities you can do, take a brisk walk at KHSRA and enjoy the spectacular views and hundreds of plants and animals in the Baldwin Hills area.

*Contributing Author: Jeremiah R. Garza, MA, MPH, CHES, Health Educator, Service Planning Area 6
Olga Galvan, MPH, CHES, Director of Binational/Border Health Program
Esther Feldman, President, Community Conservancy International
Reference: July 2003 L.A. Health, Dept. of Health Services, Public Health*

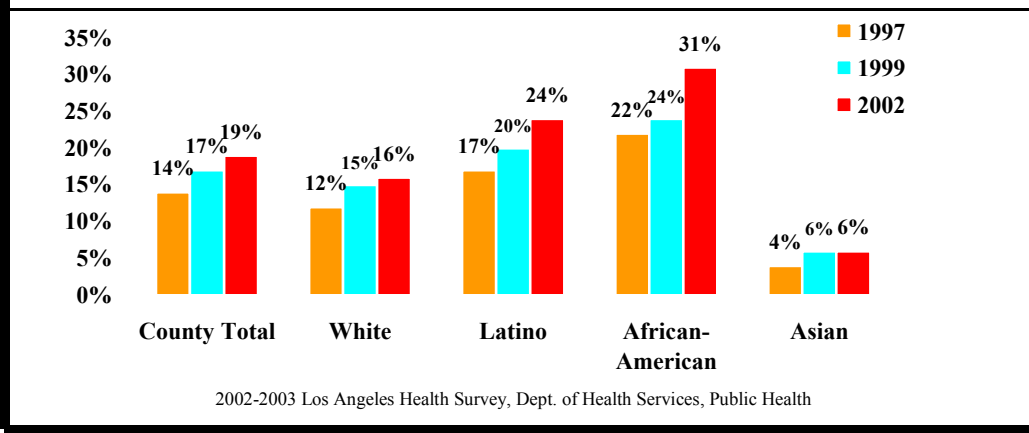
A. BELINDA TOWNS, M.D., M.P.H.

Dr. A. Belinda Towns has accepted the post of acting Medical Director for Community Health Services. Community Health Services includes the 8 Area Health Offices, 13 Public Health Clinics, Public Health Nursing Administration, Public Health Investigations, Quality Assurance Program, and community preventive dental services. Dr. Towns will continue

her leadership role as Area Health Officer for SPA 6 through her Area Medical Director (for internal management) and her Area Nurse Manager (for community relations and communication). As such, Dr. Towns will continue to work hard to ensure that the needs of SPA 6 will not be neglected.

Dr. Towns has been with the department since 2001 and has proven her leadership talent in many ways. For instance, prior to coming to L.A. County Department of Health Services, Public Health, she was the Regional Director for HOPE Worldwide's "HOPE for Kids Program," a 6 county immunization and community outreach program. She also created and directed the Urban Health Initiative, a project, jointly supported by the California Endowment and World Health Organization (WHO), focused on addressing inner city health concerns and developing solutions. Dr. Towns is board certified in Preventive Medicine and Public Health, has practiced Primary Care medicine, and was the Director of the Primary Care Curriculum and Charles R. Drew University Medicine and Science program for 5 years.

Figure 1. Prevalence of Obesity Among Adults by Race/ Ethnicity, 1997-2002



HOLIDAY SHARING – PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Driven by the holiday spirit of giving and the personal commitment to contribute to the neighborhoods in which they professionally serve, public health nurses and community workers at South Health Center donated toys and food items to local families in need. Although they admit that the idea to sponsor families this past holiday season came late, public health nurses, like Denise Siders, were pleased with the strong support from South Health Center staff and the generous donations made by her fellow nurses. Given the success of this project, measured by the joy experienced by all involved, public health nurses at South Health Center plan on repeating the effort and sponsoring local families again this coming holiday season. Well done!

By Denise Siders, South Health Center Public Health Nurse.



Tracey Simmons, South Health Center Public Health Nurse, with Mr. Javier Soto Flores and Family

South SPA Quarterly Chronicle Selected Reportable Diseases (Provisional Data)

South SPA Executive Team

Area Health Officer:	A. Belinda Towns, M.D., M.P.H.
Area Medical Director:	Maxine Liggins, M.D.
Director of Operations	Willie Mae Howard, M.P.A.
Area Nurse Manager:	Martina Travis, RN, M.P.H.
Community Liaison:	Lottie Perkins, BSN, M.H.A.
Epidemiology Analyst:	Farimah Fiali
Health Educator:	Jeremiah R. Garza, MA, MPH, CHES
Health Ed. Coordinator:	Teresa Level
Area Secretary:	Erika Altamirano

Chronicle Staff

The South Chronicle is a quarterly publication of the South Service Planning Area (SPA6), providing updates on projects, outreach and health and safety issues relevant to the community. Please forward comments, suggestions or address changes to the Editor at the address below or contact us at: **Office: (323) 235-6711—Fax: (323) 846-5442; Jgarza@dhs.co.la.ca.us**

SOUTH SPA HEALTH VISION STATEMENT

Individuals working together in families, organizations, and businesses to increase the length of healthy life for all residents of South SPA 6

SOUTH SPA COMMUNITY PLEDGE

*I pledge to promote the health of our community
by keeping a watchful eye on my own health,
cherishing the health of my family,
and reminding my friends and neighbors
to practice healthy habits.*

*I pledge to affirm and protect the innocence
of our youth, the success of our families, and
the wisdom of our seniors.*

Disease	Jul- Sep2003	Jul- Sep2002	Oct- Dec2003	Oct- Dec2002
AIDS	77	51	69	45
Amebiasis	0	0	1	0
Campylobacteriosis	1	6	2	7
Chlamydial Infections	2,309	2,209	1956	2217
Encephalitis	1	0	0	0
Gonorrhea	654	651	557	592
Hepatitis Type A	1	1	0	1
Hepatitis Type B	0	0	0	2
Hepatitis Type C	0	0	0	0
Measles	0	0	0	0
Meningitis	5	4	3	5
Meningococcal Infections	1	0	0	1
Non-gonococcal Urethritis	50	44	46	58
Pertussis	0	1	0	1
Salmonellosis	1	6	4	5
Shigellosis	1	16	6	14
Syphilis, primary & secondary	6	4	4	7
Syphilis, early latent (<1 yr.)	11	10	3	3
Tuberculosis	20	33	63	34



SOUTH SPA 6 Chronicle

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Public Health Mission: To safeguard and improve the health of all Los Angeles County residents.